

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

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ATTACHMENT

April 7, 1961

Dear Mr. President:

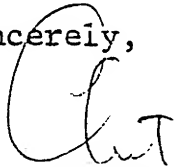
I dictated the enclosed memorandum for you following a brief discussion in your office about some of the longer range projects which are under way here in the Department.

However, because of the pressure during Dean Rusk's absence, it was not fully typed at that time.

Even though some of it has been overtaken by events, I am sending it on belatedly, as I thought some of it might interest you.

With my warmest regards,

Sincerely,



Chester Bowles

Enclosure

The President,  
The White House

THE UNDER SECRETARY OF STATE  
WASHINGTON

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EYES ONLY

March 29, 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

Here is a brief outline of some of the studies now going on in the Department of State to which I referred in our conversation in your office on Monday.

Some of them are urgent; all, I believe, are important.

1. A broad reappraisal of our position in regard to China. This seeks to answer the following questions:

A. What is our proper relation to the Chinese Civil War? Is its continuation in our own national interest? Until this question has been clearly answered, our policies in East Asia will often suffer from expediency.

B. What can or should we do about Quemoy and Matsu? In particular, what about our implied commitment to their defense?

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C. Can we develop a rationale on non-recognition that will be more acceptable to world opinion? (Instead of basing our refusal to recognize Communist China on her lack of "peace loving" qualities, would it not be more persuasive to point out that we cannot accept the Chinese condition that we sell ten million Chinese Nationalists and Formosans down the river as the price of "normal" relationships?)

D. How can we best handle the tactical situation in the United Nations regarding membership of Nationalist and/or Communist China? Also the longer term question: If U. S. public opinion could be disregarded (which it cannot) would Chinese Communist membership in the UN be contrary to our national interests? Or is there a parallel here with our refusal to recognize the USSR between 1918 and 1933?

E. What are the channels through which we can most effectively discuss our views with the Chinese

-3-

the Chinese Nationalists? The Generalissimo's son is anxious to visit the U. S. in June. Should we encourage this visit as an opportunity to communicate our views to his father?

F. The fact that China is traditionally imperialistic and, in regard to certain resources, also a "have not" power, may be as dangerous as the fact that it is Communist led and oriented.

What about the long-range military and political implications of this complex set of forces? Regardless of the immediate outcome of the present Laotian crisis, China's inadequate land base (an average of only 1.8 acres of arable land for each rural family) plus her lack of petroleum may generate increasing pressures for a massive military expansion into the fertile, well-watered lebensraum of Southeast Asia, where these basic shortages might be met for a generation or so.

For the

For the short haul, what is the most effective combination of military and political measures by which such a movement can be contained? And if these measures fail, how could it be stopped by military action?

Equally important for the longer haul, what policies may serve gradually to release some of the explosive steam from the Chinese political boiler?

I believe we may gravely underestimate the role of China in the Laotian crisis, the leverage which the Peking government can bring to bear, and the possibility that China may repudiate any reasonable settlement agreed to by the Kremlin and act unilaterally.

Sooner or later the Kremlin may be forced to choose between two highly disadvantageous courses of action: abandoning its efforts to woo India and non-Communist world opinion by posing as the chief advocate of peaceful solutions, on the one hand, or facing the possibility of an open breach with an increasingly aggressive China on the other.

2. Intermediate

2. Intermediate Missile Bases in Turkey, Britain, and Italy.

The Acheson report stressed the vulnerability of these bases, their provocative "first strike" appearances as the Soviets see them, and their diminishing military importance in view of the greatly expanded Polaris and Minuteman programs.

The Atomic Energy Committee and the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy are also concerned about the posture we inherited from the previous administration in regard to these particular installations.

George McGhee has undertaken a study of these questions in light of the commitments already made. This report will be ready soon.

3. Soviet Pressure on Berlin - Increasing Soviet pressure for change in the status of Berlin is likely to be applied in the near future. It will be unfortunate if we are caught in a wholly negative position.

Is there

Is there not some valid proposal that would enable us to go beyond our "stand firm" posture in regard to Berlin itself to suggest a fresh approach to the entire European military impasse?

One possibility involves an agreement for step-by-step reduction of all forces with full inspection between the Urals and the English Channel, while leaving the present political confrontation unchanged.

I suggested this possibility to Khrushchev in a meeting I had with him in February 1957. In March, 1958, an almost identical proposal was advanced by de Gaulle.

A few days later at a press conference, Adenauer said, "As the result of discussion with responsible military bodies, I am in a position, putting it quite generally, to subscribe to what General de Gaulle has said about the size, extent and nature of a so-called zone of relaxed tensions. . . . Such a zone would only serve its purpose if disarmament were carried out from the Atlantic to the Urals."

Conceivably (although

Conceivably (although admittedly unlikely) this concept might appeal to the Soviet as a means of freeing resources, military or otherwise, which may be needed in the coming decade to cope with the Chinese pressure from the East and South. In our interests it would relieve much of the present military pressure on Western Europe without interfering with the major nuclear deterrent on either side.

Even though it were rejected by the Kremlin, a fresh initiative of this kind by us would make a favorable impression on world opinion, and help underscore the narrowness and sterility of whatever proposals the Soviet may make in regard to Berlin.

It would also help to free us from the disadvantageous impasse into which we are drawn by Soviet insistence on "general and complete disarmament."

I have discussed this with Dean Acheson who thought it worth exploring. Its implications, of course, are far reaching, and it will take the most careful consideration before it could be advanced as a serious proposal.

4. Fresh



4. Fresh Approach to Southeast Asia - We should also consider the need for policies in Southeast Asia that more adequately reflect the long-term military, political, and economic realities in that crucial area.

Our present difficulties there are largely chargeable to past errors and misconceptions which stretch back to the Franco-Indo-Chinese conflict which began there in 1948.

It was folly to assume that the French, acting as a colonial power, could indefinitely stand off a well led, organized, and equipped Communist challenge, regardless of how many arms we provided them.

Following the Geneva Conference in 1954, we made the further mistake of assuming that generous military aid and able technicians could turn the peaceful Laotians into war-minded Turks or Serbo-Croatians.

In 1954 we also became the dominate foreign influence in Viet-Nam, and our grants of military equipment, economic aid, and military training there have been very substantial. Yet today the Viet-Nam government is wobbly and unsure while the internal Communist threat steadily increases.

The Castro

The Castro experience awakened us to our mistakes in Latin America and prodded us into wiser courses of action. It is essential that we also learn from our mistakes elsewhere.

As a basis for the development of a more creative and effective long-range American policy in South Asia, we are undertaking an analysis of our actions there in the last ten years. This may serve as a starting point for more effective policies in the future. It could also be the basis for a White Paper that would help enlighten the American people on the mess you inherited on January 20th.

The potential role of India and Japan in Southeast Asia as the two major non-Communist power-centers between the Arabian Sea and the Northwest Pacific may be worth particular consideration.

For instance, how could we persuade the Indians and Japanese to "guarantee" the integrity of Southeast Asia against outside pressures, as we guaranteed the integrity of Latin America through the Monroe Doctrine? Could American sea and air power perform the same role as the

as the backer of this guarantee that the British navy did in regard to the Monroe Doctrine'

5. The CENTO Meeting in Late April - Although we cannot abandon our CENTO military arrangements (ill-advised as they may have been at the outset), it would appear wise to switch our emphasis to the broader political, economic, and social measures which will help relate the CENTO program to the security of the Middle East as a whole.

Over the long haul the security of South Asia can be secured only if means can be found to bring Pakistan, Afghanistan, and India together in the joint defense of the area. This is a priority task to which the full resources of American diplomacy should be assigned. At best it will not be an easy one.

In the meantime in view of the disturbed relationships between Pakistan and Afghanistan and Pakistan and India, the more weapons we give Pakistan, the less secure the whole area becomes. In view of past commitments, where is the proper balance?

6. The

-11-

6. The Changing Requirements of our Overseas Military Base Installations.

Rapidly changing military technology will greatly lessen the importance of many of our overseas bases within the next year or so. It will be a grave mistake to continue to drift into situations such as we now face in regard to Dahran and Morocco, where we are either pushed out of costly installations prematurely or leave voluntarily without securing some compensatory political advantage.

When it is clear that an overseas base will soon lose its military significance we should act before its diminishing potential is obvious to everyone else. Even though we fail to secure substantial compensating concessions from the Soviets, our willingness to withdraw, skillfully presented, can emphasize our desire for relaxed tensions.

On the other hand, where a military base is essential to our security, we should do whatever may be required to create the favorable political and economic climate which will enable us to keep it. We

were very

-12-

were very nearly pushed out of our critically important installations in Iceland because we neglected to buy \$10 million worth of Icelandic fish.

I have asked Chip Bohlen to take charge of this study for the Department of State. Paul Nitze will be handling it at the Pentagon.

7. The Future Relationship of South Korea to Japan and China.

South Korea, in my opinion, can no more be allowed to "float" than can West Germany. In the next few years we are likely to see South Korea drift toward a close economic association with Communist China unless we can help her to establish closer and more advantageous economic and political relationships with Japan. For the last ten years Syngman Rhee's deep antagonism to Japan has made such a relationship impossible.

Now that he has gone, this political objective should be recognized as primary and our economic programs in Korea shaped accordingly.

8. Our

8. Our Policy in Regard to Neutralism - We urgently need to rationalize our position in regard to "neutralism." In some areas we welcome it; in others, we view it with alarm.

What is the proper balance? Under what conditions, for instance, would we be willing to accept a truly neutral Southeast Asia?

As the newly awakened nations of Latin America gain confidence, their votes in the United Nations may be increasingly difficult to influence. Yet on balance the new vigor and sense of independence which are being generated there may more than balance their unwillingness to support our views willy-nilly on every issue.

9. Military Assistance - In what countries is military assistance generally needed to meet the threat of Soviet armed attack and if so, what are the basic requisites?

In what countries is the need primarily for internal security and how well is the aid we have been giving adapted for that purpose?

In what

In what countries is our military assistance largely designed to keep their restless generals happy and loyal? In the latter instances, is there no better or cheaper way to accomplish this political objective?

The study to which we have assigned Burt Marshall will seek to answer these and similar questions. It is due in May.

10. U. S. Recognition of Mongolia - Last Fall we voted against Mongolia's entrance into the UN. In large measure this represented a kind of reflex reaction. Yet there may be advantages in withdrawing our opposition to UN membership, provided it led to the establishment of a U. S. Embassy in Mongolia.

What would we learn there? And what would be the effect on the Peking government of Soviet willingness to accept a U. S. Mission in an area which was once part of Greater China and which the Chinese Communists still seek to control?

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-15-

In many areas we have made substantial gains in the first few weeks of your administration. In regard to Africa, Latin America, economic aid, NATO, and UN, we have greatly improved our position.

We have made less progress in gaining the political initiative in Europe, in improving the sterile Eisenhower position in the Middle East and South Asia, and in developing more affirmative programs in Southeast Asia and the Far East.

It is my hope that we can substantially bolster our position in these key areas in the next few months. The studies which I have described and others being conducted by George McGhee and his Policy Planning Staff may be helpful to this end.

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